Bad shape of indigenous soft drinks companies

†*266. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various indigenous soft drinks companies have either been closed or are on the verge of the closure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering to provide financial assistance to restart the said soft drinks companies; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The soft drink manufacturing does not require license under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951 and therefore, the information about some units having either been closed or being on the verge of closure is not furnished to the Government.

(c) and (d) No such specific scheme is being operated. However, the Department of Food Processing Industries, under Plan Schemes, provides assistance for seting up, expansion and modernization of agro-horticultural (including meat, poultry, dairy & fisheries) based Food Processing units.

Nuclear and Conventional Weapons

*268. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan's military regime has lately proposed to India a strategic restraint regime on nuclear and conventional weapons on a reciprocal basis to avoid arms race in the region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's response and reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH); (a) and (b) On 13th June, 2000, Pakistan, through an official statement, suggested that India and Pakistan

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

adhere to a "strategic restraint regime for avoidance of an arms race, nuclear and conventional, and confidence building in the region...on a reciporcal basis". The statement was issued on the eve of resumption of Pakistan's dialogue with the US on non-proliferation after a long gap.

(c) This proposal is not new and remains based on Pakistan's desire to seek parity with India; it has been put forward with propagandist intent. India has taken the lead in initiating discussions at the bilateral level on formalisation of restraint in the region including during PM's historic visit to Lahore in February, 1999. Unfortunately, Pakistan's armed intrusion in Kargil and its repudiation of mutually agreed upon confidence-building measures and agreements, has set this process back. Pakistan needs to take necessary steps to restore trust to enable this process to resume.

Rehabilitation of Families in Udhamsingh Nagar

†*269. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 32 given in the Rajya Sabha on February 24, 2000 and state:

(a) what advice has been given to State Government by Government and what are the details of progress made to rehabilitate 1729 distressed families, in district Udhamsingh Nagar by the State Government; and

(b) by when it is targeted to be completed by the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The responsibility for taking necessary relief, restoration and rehabilitation measures at ground level in the wake of natural calamities is that of the State Government concerned. Further necessary action in this regard is required to be taken by Government of Uttar Pradesh.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.